

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 0730

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NI
SUBJECT: ANOTHER VIEW OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND POSSIBLE
PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS

1. THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL/LABOR ASSISTANT HAS VISITED
THE SATELLITE TOWN WHICH HOUSES MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT
ASSEMBLY (CA) AND ATTENDED SOME OF THE EVENING
CAUCUS SESSIONS WHICH MEMBERS HOLD TO DISCUSS FORTHCOMING
ISSUES IN THE ASSEMBLY AND LONGER TERM POLITICAL ACTIVITY.
THE FOLLOWING REPORT PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF HIS UNDER-
STANDING OF THE WAY THE CA IS OPERATING BEHIND THE SCENES.

2. CA MEMBERS CAUCUS IN REGIONAL GROUPINGS--EASTERN,
WESTERN, NORTHERN--SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK TO DISCUSS VARIOUS
PROBLEMS BEFORE THE CA AND FUTURE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.
THE LAGOS, OGUN, OYON AND OYO DELEGATIONS GENERALLY
ATTEND THE WESTERN CAUCUS. MEMBERS FROM ANAMBRA, IMO,
CROSS, RIVERS AND SOME FROM BENDEL AND BENUE ATTEND
THE EASTERN CAUCUS. "THE OTHERS" ATTEND THE NORTHERN CAUCUS.

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3. AFTER DISCUSSING VARIOUS ISSUES IN REGIONAL CAUCUSES,
MEMBERS CONGREGATE IN THE LOUNGE FOR INFORMAL INTER-
REGIONAL DISCUSSIONS. AT THESE DISCUSSIONS CHIEF VICTOR
OLABISI (BISI) ONABANJO OF OGUN TENDS TO SPEAK FOR THE
WEST, KINGSLEY OZUMBIA MBADIWE OF IMO USUALLY SPEAKS FOR THE
EAST, AND BOTH ADAMU CIROMA OF BORNO AND ALHAJI NUHU BAMALI
(NOMINATED MEMBER WHO WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSTITUTION

DRAFTING COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM) SPEAK FOR THE NORTH. THE SESSIONS ARE INFORMAL AND APPARENTLY ANY MEMBER MAY JOIN DISCUSSIONS, BUT THESE INDIVIDUALS GENERALLY SPEAK FOR THEIR REGIONAL GROUPS. IN THESE SESSIONS ISSUES BEFORE THE CA ARE DISCUSSED AND COMPROMISES ARE REACHED ENABLING THE CA TO MOVE MORE RAPIDLY THROUGH ITS FORMAL MEETINGS.

4. IN REGIONAL CAUCUSES THE MEMBERS ALSO DISCUSS FUTURE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES (AND WE ASSUME LOWER LEVEL POLITICAL GROUPINGS). AMONG THE 41 MEMBERS OF THE LAGOS, OGUN, ONDO AND OYO DELEGATIONS, 20 STRONGLY FAVOR CHIEF OBAFEMI AWOLOWO AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, WITH ADAMU CIROMA AS HIS VICE PRESIDENT. THE OTHER 21 MEMBERS ARE OPPOSED TO AWOLOWO BUT ARE LESS CLEAR ON WHOM THEY SUPPORT. CHIEF OLU AKINFOSILE IS FAVORED BY SOME, BUT A NUMBER WOULD LIKE TO SEE CHIEF RICHARD OSULALE ABIMBOLA AKINJIDE AS THE WESTERN CANDIDATE. CHIEF AKINJIDE REPORTEDLY WOULD LIKE TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT, BUT HAS BEEN PERSUADED BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ANTI-AWOLOWO GROUP TO STEP ASIDE FOR AKINFOSILE.

5. THE EASTERN GROUP HAS NOT PUSHED ANY PARTICULAR CANDIDATE, BUT MBADIWE HAS PERSONALLY PUSHED DR. (SIR FRANCIS) AKANU IBIAM, GOVERNOR OF THE EASTERN REGION DURING MOST OF THE PERIOD OF CIVILIAN RULE.
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6. THE NORTHERN GROUP HAS NOT PUSHED ANY PARTICULAR CANDIDATE, BUT DEFINITELY WANTS TO RUN A MAN FOR PRESIDENT AND IS NOT INTERESTED IN THE NUMBER TWO SLOT BEHIND AWOLOWO.

7. COMMENT: WE SHOULD CAVEAT REPORT WITH THE NOTE THAT OUR SOURCE IS A YORUBA FROM OYO STATE AND OBVIOUSLY VIEWS THE SITUATION FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE. HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION AMONG YORUBAS APPEARS QUITE GOOD, BUT HE OBVIOUSLY KNOWS LESS ABOUT THE NORTHERN DELEGATIONS. WE SHOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT HE ASSIGNS A MUCH LOWER PRIORITY TO THE ROLE OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE THAN WE HAVE ASSUMED BASED ON COMPLAINTS FROM VARIOUS MEMBERS REPORTED IN LAGOS 598

8. IT IS INTERESTING THAT HE SEES THE NORTHERN DELEGATIONS AS THE ONLY GROUP WHICH HAS TWO CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE SPOKESMEN IN THE INTER-REGIONAL CAUCUS. WE SUSPECT THESE TWO MEN MAY REFLECT SEPARATE NORTHERN FACTIONS. ADAMU CIROMA IS A KADURI FROM BORNO, YOUNGER (43) AND REPORTEDLY CLOSE TO YAR'ADUA. WE BELIEVE HE REPRESENTS YAR'ADUA'S GROUP

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 0730

WITHIN THE SMC IN THE CA AND PROBABLY GENERALLY LEADS THE
GROUP OF YOUNG NORTHERNERS WHO TEND TO BE MORE PROGRESSIVE
AND LESS RESPONSIVE TO THE VIEWS OF THE TRADITIONAL ELITE.

9. BAMALI IS OLDER THAN CIROMA (60), FORMER FOREIGN
MINISTER (1965-1966), SENATOR FROM THE NORTH IN THE CIVILIAN
GOVERNMENT (1960-1966), FORMER MEMBER OF THE NORTHERN
PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, AND REPORTEDLY A LEADING AUTHORITY ON
THE HAUSA LANGUAGE. WE SUSPECT HE TENDS TO REPRESENT THE
MORE TRADITIONAL NORTHERN ELITE.

10. WE ALSO WONDER HOW THE MIDDLE BELT STATES FIT INTO THE
CAUCUS QUESTION SINCE OUR SOURCE DOES NOT COUNT KWARA IN
THE WESTERN CAUCUSE, COUNTS SOME BENUE MEMBERS IN THE EASTERN
CAUCUS, AND ASSUMES OTHER MIDDLE BELT STATES FALL INTO
THE NORTHERN CAUCUS. GIVEN REPORTED MIDDLE BELT
OPPOSITION TO THE SHARIA COURT, AND OTHER REPORTS OF
MIDDLE BELT MEMBERS JOINING WITH SOUTHERNERS, WE DOUBT
THAT THE ANSWER IS THIS SIMPLE.

1. THE AWOLOWO/CIROMA TICKET IS AN OBVIOUS ONE FOR
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AWOLOWO SUPPORTERS COMBINING THE AGE, NAME AND LEADERSHIP OF AWOLOWO WITH A YOUNG, WELL KNOWN NORTHERNER. WE, HOWEVER, QUESTION CIROMA'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A NUMBER TWO POSITION BEHIND AWOLOWO. IT DOES, HOWEVER, FIT WITH THE ANALYSIS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OFFERED TO THE CONSUL IN KADUNA REPORTED IN LAGOS 598.

12. THE AKINKIDE/AKINFOSILE OPPOSITION TO AWOLOWO REFLECTS TRADITIONAL YORUBA INFIGHTING SINCE BOTH ARE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NIGERIAN CITIZENS AND OPPONENTS OF AWOLOWO. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, AWOLOWO'S STRONGEST SUPPORT IS IN LAGOS AND OGUN DELEGATIONS WITH LESS SUPPORT IN OYO AND ONLY ONE SUPPORTER IN THE ONDO DELEGATION.

13. DR. IBIAM STRIKES US AS A NON-CANDIDATE SINCE HE WAS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH BIAFRA DURING THE WAR AS AN ADVISER TO OJUKWU AND SPOKESMAN IN WESTERN EUROPE FOR THE SECESSIONIST REGIME. A GOOD, BUT EMOTIONAL SPEAKER, HE REPORTEDLY MADE A NUMBER OF IMPASSIONED SPEECHES ON BIAFRA'S BEHALF DURING THE WAR, INCLUDING A FAMOUS CALL FOR THE PEOPLE OF ENUGU TO DEFEND THE CITY TO THE LAST MAN AGAINST FEDERAL FORCES. DESPITE THESE OBVIOUS DRAWBACKS, IF THERE IS A VIABLE IBO CANDIDATE, IT MIGHT WELL BE HE AS A LEADING CHRISTIAN SOUTHERNER. HE IS MARRIED TO A YORUBA AND IS APPARENTLY A WELL KNOWN CHRISTIAN LEADER IN NIGERIA. HE IS A FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF NIGERIA. ON JANUARY 7, A FULL PAGE ARTICLE BY HIM WAS PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY TIMES WHICH READS VERY MUCH LIKE A CAMPAIGN SPEECH. HE WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, THE NORTH AND THE SHARIA COURT SYSTEM.

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14. INsofar AS NORTHERN CANDIDATES ARE CONCERNED, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THE LACK OF SUCH CANDIDATES IN OUR SOURCE'S ANALYSIS REFLECTS HIS LACK OF CONTACTS AMONG NORTHERNERS RATHER THAN A PAUCITY OF POLITICKING. IN THIS CONNECTION, TWO REPORTERS FOR THE DAILY TIMES RECENTLY SPECULATED TO A USIS OFFICER THAT ALHAJI AMINU KANO WAS THE MOST LIKELY MAN TO BE THE FIRST CIVILIAN PRESIDENT. IN THEIR VIEW, KANO IS THE ONLY MAN WHO HAS SUFFICIENTLY BROAD APPEAL ACROSS SECTIONAL LINES TO WIN A NATIONAL ELECTION. KANO IS A RELATIVELY YOUNG (57) ANATIVE OF KANAO AND A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE NORTHERN PEOPLE'S CONGRESS WHO LATER BROKE WITH THAT ORGANIZATION TO ESTABLISH THE NORTHERN ELEMENTS PROGRESSIVE UNION. HE SERVED AS COMMISSIONER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH

UNDER THE GOWON REGIME AND WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSTITUTION
DRAFTING COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CITIZENSHIP, CITIZEN-
SHIP RIGHTS, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, POLITICAL PARTIES AND
ELECTORAL SYSTEM. HE ALSO PARTICIPATED WITH A NUMBER OF
OTHER NORTHERN POLITICANS IN THE FOUNDING OF THE KANO
STATE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING (SEE 77 LAGOS 13461)
WHICH MANY FEEL IS AN EMBRYONIC POLITICAL PARTY. WHILE HIS
EXPERIENCE AND NORTHERN CREDENTIALS APPEAR TO BE QUITE
GOOD, WE CANNOT COMMENT ON HIS ACCEPTABILITY AMONG
SOUTHERNERS.
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